

# **Transportation Conformity Working Group**

## **Interagency Consultation**

### **Meeting Summary**

**Tuesday, March 28, 2006**  
**10:00 AM – 12:00 PM**

**Southern California Association of Governments**  
**818 W 7<sup>th</sup> Street, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor**  
**Los Angeles, CA 90017**  
**Riverside 'A' Conference Room**

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The following minutes are intended to summarize the matters discussed.  
An audiocassette tape of the actual meeting is available for listening in SCAG's office.

#### **1.0 CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 AM by Jennifer Bergener, OCTA

#### **2.0 WELCOME AND SELF-INTRODUCTIONS**

##### **ATTENDANCE:**

##### **In Person:**

Naresh Amatya, SCAG  
Grace Balmir, FTA/FHWA  
Jennifer Bergener, OCTA  
Jessica Kirchner, SCAG  
Philip Law, SCAG  
Ken Lobeck, RCTC  
Betty Mann, SCAG  
Rich Macias, SCAG  
Jonathan Nadler, SCAG  
Sylvia Patsaouras, SCAG  
Arnie Sherwood, ITS/UCB/SCAG  
Carla Walecka, TCA  
Leann Williams, Caltrans District 07

##### **Via Teleconference:**

Mike Brady, Caltrans Headquarters  
Ben Cacatian, Ventura County  
Jackie Clayton, Caltrans District 11  
Paul Fagan, Caltrans District 08  
Sandy Johnson, Caltrans District 11  
Ted Matley, FDA Region 9  
Karina O'Connor, EPA Region 9  
Lisa Poe, SANBAG  
Ty Schulling, SANDBAG

### **3.0 PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

There were no public comments at this meeting.

### **4.0 CHAIR'S REPORT**

Chair Bergener, OCTA, stated she had no report but had two items she wanted to place on the agenda for the next meeting: 1) discussion of whether or not auxiliary lanes are capacity enhancing, and 2) discussion to clarify what is meant by 'significant' in the PM2.5 project-level hot-spot analysis rule.

### **5.0 ACTION ITEMS**

#### **5.1 Approval of the February 28, 2006 Meeting Summary**

MOTION was then made to MOVE the Meeting Summary. MOTION was SECONDED and UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

### **6.0 INFORMATION ITEMS**

#### **6.1 Riverside County TCM Discussion** (Ken Lobeck, RCTC)

Ken Lobeck, RCTC, initiated a discussion on whether metered HOV ramps should be classified as TCMs. RCTC has labeled HOV ramp projects as TCMs, even when they are metered ramps that would connect to mixed flow lanes. It is uncertain at this time whether the ramps will eventually connect to dedicated HOV lanes.

Grace Balmir, FHWA, stated that a metered HOV ramp, especially one that does not connect to an HOV mainline, should not be considered a TCM. Ms. Balmir stated that if staff was going by the definition of what a TCM is in the South Coast Basin, HOV lanes are TCM's but a metered HOV ramp, especially one connecting to a mixed flow lane, would not qualify as a TCM. To further clarify the situation, Ms. Balmir asked what is modeled by SCAG's regional transportation model as the node on the network. Philip Law, SCAG, stated that the model which will be used for the upcoming RTIP does not have the capability to model HOV by-pass ramps. With this, it was concluded that these types of projects are not TCMs. Ms. Balmir expressed a general concern regarding projects which are not TCMs being designated as such. If once past the design stage it is determined that a project such as a ramp will be an HOV bypass lane, one could go back and classify it as a TCM.

Arnie Sherwood, SCAG, noted that the new transportation model may provide the capability of accounting for ramps, and we should in the future consider looking at the definition of a TCM as it applies to the capabilities of the new model. Mr. Sherwood also cautioned about preliminarily designating projects as TCMs since, in the case of a project which is modeled as a TCM but once through the environmental document stage is determined not to be a TCM, substitution would be required.

Chair Bergener summarized the discussion that the RCTC HOV ramp projects in question are not TCMs since they are not bypass lanes and do not connect to a larger system; they are stand alone metered lanes.

Chair Bergener suggested having a follow-up meeting relative to potential TCMs at the next RTIP meeting, after which the issue can come back to the TCWG.

## **6.2 RTP Update (Naresh Amatya, SCAG)**

Naresh Amatya, SCAG, stated that staff is still trying to pursue an RTP timeline that would allow the transition from a three-year to four-year update cycle in the least painful way for all parties. Staff is considering moving up the plan adoption from April 2008 to the December 2007. This would give the region approximately six additional months to prepare the RTP while reducing the time we are restricted in making amendments to the RTIP or RTP as compared to April 2008.

The State of Ohio DOT has taken the initiative to develop a process that might be acceptable for the federal agencies in terms of meeting the SAFETEA-LU requirements during the fourth year. Their approach is to evaluate where the gaps are on the current RTP and develop an addendum or gap analysis to be adopted through a resolution. Ohio's DOT representatives for FHWA and FTA seem to be agreeable with this process. Staff will monitor this process to see if SCAG could pursue it as well.

Staff is also continuing to pursue the threshold issue which defines the extent of amendments that may be possible between April 2007 and the next RTP. A letter has been sent to federal DOT identifying what the threshold should be from SCAG's perspective. SCAG has no assurance that the request will get into the rule.

In terms of RTP development, SCAG staff held a TAC meeting last month focusing on the methodologies and assumptions that staff will be using to develop the Baseline Forecast. There was a general agreement on the approach and assumptions. There were a few questions that staff will clarify at the next TAC meeting. Staff will also present the county level forecast numbers for the Baseline Forecast.

As a heads up for future discussion topics, Mr. Amatya discussed two projects that were brought before the TCWG last month. Both the I-5 widening project and the OmniTrans Rapid Bus project may require amendments to the RTP. The OmniTrans Bus Rapid Transit project proposed for E Street in San Bernardino is not currently in the RTP. If this project is pursued the RTP and the RTIP would need to be amended. Regarding the I-5 widening project, the current configuration in the RTP is five lanes in each direction. The addition of another lane is being considered. If the project is so modified, an RTP amendment would likely be required.

## **6.3 RTIP Update (SCAG)**

There was no report at this time.

## **6.4 TCM Update (Jessica Kirchner, SCAG)**

Jessica Kirchner, SCAG, stated that SCAG staff is preparing the list of TCM's for timely implementation that will be included in the 2006 RTIP. A preliminary list should be available for next month's TCWG meeting. Staff is still discussing its input and potential approaches for the 2007 AQMP. SCAG staff announced and held a discussion regarding potential TCM approaches after the last TCWG meeting and we are still soliciting input in terms of what people would like to see included as TCMs in the air plan. A preliminary list of TCMs for the RTIP, which will also be used for the air plan, should be available in May.

Ben Cacatian, Ventura County Air Pollution Control District, questioned whether these TCMs are part of the RACM process for the upcoming SIP. Jonathan Nadler, SCAG, stated that the development of the TCMs for the RTIP and air plan are part of the RCAM process, but that additional work relative to identifying other potential measures would be undertaken as part of the RCAM process, and that staff will keep the group apprised of those efforts.

## **6.5 2007 AQMP Update**

Jonathan Nadler, SCAG, stated that SCAG staff attended a meeting at the SCAQMD that included EPA, ARB, and SCAG to brainstorm control measures and how to move forward with the air plan. There were a couple of break-out sessions on the different emission source categories. The SCAQMD shared some preliminary data relative to baseline emissions and necessary reductions. SCAG staff has provided socio-economic data to the SCAQMD and is in the process of providing transportation model outputs.

Ben Cacatian noted that Ventura would like to be informed about the socio-economic forecasts that go to SCAQMD. It was clarified that the socio-economic data being provided to the SCAQMD for the 2007 air plan are based on the 2004 RTP data, appropriately adjusted to account for new information. Since new base year information is available, the 2004 RTP base year data has been updated and forecast data has been adjusted as well. The development of the 2007 RTP socio-economic data is following the established vetting process through the appropriate committees and working groups.

Jean Mazur, FHWA, asked that the TCWG be informed about the socio-economic data submitted to SCAQMD. Sylvia Patsaouras, SCAG, stated that this would be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

Jonathan Nadler stated that SCAG staff has been providing socio-economic information to the Ventura County APCD and will have SCAG's socio-economic group available to discuss the data.

## **6.6 Reauthorization Guidance (FHWA)**

Jean Mazur, FHWA, stated that she did not have an update at this time.

Jessica Kirchner inquired of Ms. Mazur as to when the PM 2.5 conformity determination letter would be delivered to SCAG staff. Ms. Mazur stated that it would be sent in the near future and no further information from SCAG is necessary for the review.

## **6.7 Information Sharing**

Jean Mazur, FHWA, announced that FHWA headquarters would be doing a PM 2.5 seminar via the web to talk about the implementation of the PM2.5 rule. The agency is waiting for some additional guidance that the U.S. EPA and FHWA are working on finalizing the guidance.

## **7.0 ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 A.M.

The next meeting of the TCWG will be on Tuesday, April 25, 2006 at SCAG.